

summer. Mike Drugan and Rod Johnson played in the Governor's Cup at Castle Mound, and Mike won it! Trygve Eckhern qualified for the State Amateur, an achievement in itself.

Hurricane Katrina has affected the New Orleans area terribly, but also across the country, as well. That includes the GCSAA and golf course superintendents in America.

Our 2006 conference and show was scheduled for New Orleans in February, but that isn't going to happen. Recent scenes from the New Orleans Convention Center make the reasons for that abundantly clear.

When we realized that to be the case, many GCSAA members speculated as to an alternate site for conference. It seemed to me the perfect year to move to a northern site, an experience we haven't had since the year we met in Minneapolis. Then a friend suggest that since the Orlando Convention Center was so humongous it was likely we would return

there for a second consecutive year.

We were wrong, as I suspect most who were playing the guessing game were.

For reasons I am unaware of, GCSAA chose Houston as a place to convene the 2006 conference. I still haven't overcome the shock.

We were in Houston once in my 33- year career, and it ranks at the bottom, with Dallas, as favored sites for a conference like ours. In fact it might be worse than Dallas.

It is hard to know where to even start when describing this place. For one, I never felt safe there, and the hotels were a significant distance from the convention center. Panhandlers were a frequent bother, really hassling people for a handout. Getting around town wasn't especially easy, as I recall, and there aren't a lot of things to see while there. The town smells bad and it was dirty. The convention center wasn't very good - lousy meeting rooms - and it was ugly. The one good thing I do remember was that I had the opportunity to meet Gene

Sarazan, winner of the Old Tom Morris Award.

I will reserve final judgment until March. Who knows - maybe there have been lots and lots of improvements? And maybe circumstances left Houston as the only or best choice.

A federal court struck down a challenge to the Madison and Dane County phosphorus fertilizer ban. The challenge declared the ban to be preempted by state and federal laws, and therefore unconstitutional. The court let the ordinances stand. The plaintiffs filed an appeal with the US Court of Appeals, seeking to overturn the federal district court decision.

Over the course of 22 years as editor of The Grass Roots, never has an issue of the magazine been so late. It has been that kind of a year - busy beyond words. It won't happen again, and I won't ignore my own advice - enjoy the fall season!



"YEP, HOTTEST, DRIEST SUMMER I'VE SEEN IN QUITE A WHILE."



Cool Field Day

By Tom Schwab, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Turfgrass Field Day 2005 had a cool educational program, trade show, side tour, and even cool weather. The weather part we could have done without. Field Day had temperatures that struggled to get out of the 60s, during one of the hotter summers in recent memory. It also rained one inch the night before, making for deep ruts in the trade show area. The rain didn't dampen the attendees' spirits though. Over 300 guests, including 241 attendees and 65 sales representatives, took full advantage of all Field Day had to offer.

The traditional morning research tour was followed by an equally educational trade show period. Lunch is always superb, except it had to be enjoyed during a brief shower that occurred just when lunch was being served. The day was capped off with an optional tour of Camp Randall Stadium, to learn all about the Badger's new *FieldTurf*.

During this full day of education, attendees learned about strategies for moss control on putting greens, phosphorus runoff in the urban landscape, and how winterkill decimated lots of turf in Wisconsin this past winter. Additionally there were talks about new products available to germinate grass quicker and keep it healthier once established. Other talks focused on which turf varieties and species are best suited for different situations along with many other turf management presentations. There was something for everyone to take home whether they were from the golf, sports field, sod, lawn care, or any other turf profession.

The trade show started an hour before lunch. There were many new products and services on display along with the tried-and-true ones. Several pieces of equipment were demonstrated for attendees to see how well they worked. The commercial attendees are a key factor in the success of Field Day. The list of 2005 participants is listed here, so you know who to call on for all your commercial needs.

Field Day was concluded with an optional tour to Camp Randall Stadium sponsored by the Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association. Almost 60 attendees took advantage of this rare opportunity to go onto the field and learn all about the Badgers' new and unique playing surface called *FieldTurf*. The Packers use the same turf on a couple of their practice fields that incorporates deep synthetic carpet with crumb rubber to make a durable surface that is much softer than previous artificial turfs. UW athletic facilities maintenance superintendent Dan Wyatt led this very insightful tour of Camp

Randall that included the Dave McClain indoor practice facility. He answered all our questions and was a very knowledgeable and gracious host. The timing of our visit couldn't have been any better because the field was in the process of getting the new surface put down over part of the field for the 2005 season, so we got to see all the different layers that go into this new playing surface.

The whole day was made up of seeing different layers or strategies that go into growing healthier grass. The research tour, trade show, and athletic field tour had interesting information that everyone could take home to use on their home turf. Field Day 2005, in spite of the weather, was a cool experience. ♣

2005 Wisconsin Turfgrass Association Summer Field Day Commercial Participants

BASF	ProSource One
Bayer	Reinders
Champion Greens	Riesterer & Schnell
Conserv F S	Sports Turf Specialists
Contree Sprayer & Equipment	Syngenta
DHD Tree Products	TIP
Dow AgroSciences	The Andersons
Ero-Tex	Tiziani Golf Car
E-Z-Go Trextron	Verdicon
Geese Police	Waupaca Sand & Solutions
Horst Distributing	WDATCP
Johnson Turf Equipment	Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association
Lesco	Wisconsin Turf Equipment
Midwest Turf Products	Wisconsin Turfgrass Association
National Seed / Simplot	
Olds Seed Solutions	Yamaha Golf Car
Paul's Turf and Tree	

NOTES FROM THE NOER FACILITY

